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## PAUL HENNINGS

(WITH PORTRAIT)

Professor PAUL HENNINGS, the well-known mycologist, died after a short illness on October 14, 1908.

In the botanical circles of Berlin he was a welcome and esteemed personage, having won the sympathy of his colleagues by his extensive learning as well as by his kindly and unassuming nature. He was a distinguished collector and preparator, an authority on the world's fungi, a faithful and conscientious official of the Museum, and last, but not least, a gifted and humorous dialect poet.

As his personality and his whole nature were made up of a multitude of contradictions, understood only by those who knew him intimately, so the course of his development also shows many contradictions which alone give the key to a comprehension of this unusual man, who was, in the best sense of the word, an original.



PAUL HENNINGS was born on November 27, 1841, in Heide, Dithmarschen, Holstein. He grew up in provincial surroundings, attending the gymnasium at Meldorf until circumstances compelled him in 1860 to give up the scientific career to which he aspired, and to leave school when only a third-form boy.

He became an assistant in the Kiel botanical gardens and soon an acknowledged authority on the endemic flora. Professor NOLTE, at that time director of the gardens, gave much attention to the aspiring young man, and ever afterward looked out for his interests in the most fatherly manner.

Urged by his older countryman, the Low-German poet KLAUS GROTH, with whom he was always on the most friendly terms, he was matriculated in Kiel in the winter semester of 1863-1864. The breaking-out of the war in 1864 obliged him to give up his work in Kiel, and he secured an official position in the post-office at Augustenburg. After many changes of residence

he was transferred to Hohenwestedt where he remained until 1874. His official work was repugnant to him, and during this whole time he remained faithful to his love of science, teaching in the agricultural school of Hohenwestedt and soon taking a prominent position as a collector. In addition to all this work he began to issue not only his herbaria for agricultural purposes, but also the first hundred of his comprehensive seed collections.

In 1874, he was called by EICHLER, who at that time was director of the botanical garden at Kiel, to be his assistant. Here he put in order the LUCAS herbarium and devoted himself with great zeal to the cryptogamous herbarium. EICHLER was called to Berlin in 1879, and in 1880 he invited Professor HENNINGS to join him, and confided to him the arrangement of the newly established exhibition museum of the cryptogamous herbarium. While doing this he was also busy in the gardens. His power of application made it possible for him to complete speedily the work assigned to him.

From about 1885 he devoted himself almost exclusively to fungi. It is true that during this period he issued two fascicles of the algae of the Mark Brandenburg, but his interest centered in the mushrooms of this region, and later, when the museum received abundant collections from tropical regions, he devoted himself to the fungi of the whole world. His fine feeling for form enabled him in a short time to become an authority in all systematic questions regarding fungi. When in 1890 he was appointed assistant *Custos*, and in 1891 *Custos* of the Botanical Gardens, he had already brought together in Berlin one of the best collections of fungi in the world.

In 1902, as a well-deserved recognition of his work, he was appointed royal professor. Until his death he continued indefatigably at his work, the division of the fungi assigned him in the great museum.

Twelve months ago the death of his son paralyzed his energies and stole the pen from the busy hand.

HENNINGS in his special domain was self-taught, and his entire activity must be judged from this point of view. He possessed a fine sense of form, which made it possible for him at once to put every newly discovered species in the right place in the system. By this his work was greatly facilitated, and this explains his easy command, not only of the fungi of the Mark, but also of tropical regions. He published in twenty years 250 papers which dealt with the fungi of innumerable tropical regions. He made a specialty of the mushrooms of the German colonies and of Brazil. He dominated the difficult domain of the Hymenomycetes in a masterly manner, so that he discovered many unexpected treasures even at the gates of Berlin.

Few except those who stood near to this reserved—sometimes almost repellent—man, suspected that he had a really childlike soul, one particu-

larly responsive to lyric poetry and to the dialect of his home. He wrote many humorous poems, revealing a rich poetical power, a deep comprehension of life, and a faithful devotion to his home.

He showed rare courteousness to his friends and even with strangers he was not parsimonious of his great knowledge. Helpful, modest, retiring, a man of the old stamp, of the right sort, has passed away with this scholar. Honor to his memory!—Translated from the German of LINDAU, by J. PERKINS, *Berlin*.

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### PURE CULTURES OF FUNGI

The *Association internationale des botanistes*, founded some years ago, has an office where pure cultures of fungi can be obtained either in exchange for others, or on payment. Although this fact is probably not unknown to the readers of this journal, we wish to remind them of it and state its exact purpose, trusting that more use will be made of the office than has been the case hitherto.

This office proposes to become a living register of the described fungi. Large numbers of species are mentioned in the handbooks, which are said to be insufficiently described and cannot possibly be identified. The number of identical species described under different names is immense. This evil may be avoided in future if every mycologist, when describing a new fungus, will send a culture to the office of the *Association*. The author not only is thereby relieved of its cultivation, but everyone who is studying kindred species may procure material for comparison.

Rather frequent applications are made to the office, but the collection does not grow in proportion to the description of new species. It has often happened that upon requesting a person to send us a culture of a certain recently described fungus, the author is obliged to reply that the cultures have been lost. Who can be sure ever to find again his fungus? The little trouble of sending it to the office, however, would have saved the original material to posterity.

But the office does not desire the new species only. Those also will be acceptable of which you have pure cultures and which are not mentioned in our list, published regularly in the *Botanisches Centralblatt*; because many species are asked for which we do not possess. You are requested to tell us whether the species left to our care need frequent renewing. The greater part of our cultures are transferred once every three months, but many of them need particular care.

Further information, and details of terms for the proposed service will be gladly supplied on application.—DR. JOHANNA WESTERDIJK, 1 *Roemer Vischerstraat, Amsterdam, Holland*.